

Patrick E. Sheplee

1. Background and Experience

My wife, Karen and I bought our current house in Lake Bethany in the fall of 2000. We have been married for 49 years and have 3 children and 5 grandchildren. Our primary residence is in Columbia, MD and we spend significant time in Bethany Beach.

I graduated from the University of Maryland with a BS in Accounting. I have spent my professional career in public accounting as well as private industry. I am a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the AICPA and MACPA. In Bethany Beach, I served as the Chair of the Audit Committee for 6 years and am currently a member of the Charter and Ordinance Review and Fourth of July Parade Committees. I have been a member of Council since 2017 and am the only non-resident member. In addition, I have been a member of the Board and Treasurer of the Lake Bethany Community Association since 2008 and volunteer to help with the Beach and Bay Cottage Tour, Operation Seas the Day, and our Fourth of July Parade.

2. Policy Directions

My primary goal as a member of Council is to continue the sound fiscal and moderate policies that enable our Town to accomplish our goals without large increases in taxes and fees or extensive borrowing. I believe that the improvements we made last year to S Atlantic Avenue were a success. These need to be extended to N Atlantic as well as Pennsylvania Avenues, but with careful input to design modifications that consider the unique aspects of those streets. The goal is to improve drainage and provide a safer space for pedestrians and cyclists to travel. And this needs to be done with as little disruption to residents as possible and when financially feasible. I also want the Town to continue the work that has been started on improving Wi-Fi service in our area.

3. Issues of Interest

A. Storm Induced and Nuisance Flooding

This is a very difficult subject that affects us all. Roughly 2/3 of Bethany Beach is at or below sea level. Future estimates predict that this will only get worse. We live at the ocean and are bordered on two sides by tidal canals. There is little area where water can go. That said, I believe it is incumbent upon the Council to continue to explore all avenues to secure and preserve our beautiful community.

Nuisance flooding is caused by normal amounts of rain and tidal events. The improvements that we made to S Atlantic Ave included using permeable asphalt with great success. I believe that this should be continued in future Town projects. I am also in favor of requiring permeable surfaces in private construction projects. We need to provide as much area as possible for the water to drain.

It is essential to our future well-being that we do everything possible to secure the continuation of the Federal beach replenishment program. The dunes that are rebuilt as part of this program have saved the Town from significant damage from recent storms. Our beach area is why people move here and why they visit. We must preserve it.

B. Working with Other Towns

To effectively address common issues such as flooding and beach replenishment, we need to continue to work cooperatively with other towns through membership in the Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT) and the Association of Coastal Towns (ACT). These collaborative efforts give us a stronger voice in communicating with decision makers at the county, state, and federal levels.

C. Pedestrian and Cycle Safety

This is another issue that is critical to all of us. I support realistic measures that improve pedestrian and cycle safety. Some will be incorporated into the improvements to N Atlantic and Pennsylvania Avenues. I also supported the new pedestrian path that will be built this fall along east Collins St.

If reelected, I will continue to consider and represent the interests of all the citizens of Bethany Beach and do everything I can to preserve and improve our community.